

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 13 April 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Federal Government and the German public view with utmost concern the tragedy that is about to unfold in the Horn of Africa.

The looming natural disaster is compounded by long-standing armed conflicts in the region. The diversion of resources through excessive expenditures for the purchase of armaments has curtailed the ability of authorities to respond responsibly to the basic needs of their famine-stricken population.

The Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Joschka Fischer, has expressed his dismay about this development in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, on 7 April 2000 and to the Foreign Ministers of Ethiopia and Eritrea as well as the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity. In addition, we experienced that relief supplies to those in need have been seriously impeded, as parties to conflict in the region use the limited transport capacities for military purposes. The whole situation is about to spiral out of control; a humanitarian tragedy of unprecedented magnitude is in the making, which clearly poses a severe threat to the already frail stability in the region.

On behalf of my Government and in accordance with Article 35 of the Charter of the United Nations, I bring this situation to your attention and urge you to put this on the agenda of the Security Council as soon as possible.

We suggest that the Security Council should urgently appeal to the Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea to avoid any military conflict and solve their problems by peaceful means only. In addition, all countries should be requested to end immediately the sale of arms and weapons into the region, in order not to destabilize the region further. Security Council resolution 1227 (1999) of 10 February 1999 is clearly violated. All available funds and resources should be concentrated to those in dire need.

I do trust that such a meeting of the Security Council will be open to the public and all States Members of the United Nations in order to give interested Member States the opportunity to make their views on the situation known.

(Signed) Dr. Dieter Kastrup
Ambassador

